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# WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

January 20, 2026

ADVOCACY | ACCESS | AWARENESS

# MEETING AGENDA

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# TAXATION

UPDATES FROM LAST WEEK AND LOOKING AHEAD

## **Upcoming Public Hearing: Tues 1/20 1:00 PM @ State House, Room 127**

### **LD 2044 – AN ACT TO ALLOW FOR THE TRANSFERABILITY OF THE BIOFUEL PRODUCTION AND RENEWABLE CHEMICALS TAX CREDITS**

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

#### **Position: Monitor**

The bill would provide for the transfer of the biofuel production and renewable chemical tax credits to third parties.

## **Upcoming Work Session: Wed 1/21 10:00 AM @ State House, Room 127**

### **LD 191 – AN ACT TO SUPPORT MAINE BUSINESSES BY ESTABLISHING A PASS-THROUGH ENTITY TAX AND TAX CREDIT**

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

#### **Position: Support**

The bill would establish a Pass-Through Entity Tax, as a workaround for the SALT cap limitations at the federal level, for pass through entities in Maine.

**Implications: The bill would allow pass-through entities to be taxed at entity level rather than at the individual level, providing Maine businesses with significant tax relief at the federal level.**

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# TAXATION

UPDATES FROM LAST WEEK AND LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session: Wed 1/21 10:00 AM @ State House, Room 127**

## **LD 926 – AN ACT TO PROMOTE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE STATE BY AMENDING THE RESEARCH EXPENSE TAX CREDIT**

Policy Committee: Tax

Advocate: Linda Caprara

**Position: Support original version/Oppose amended version**

As originally drafted, the bill would have increased the research expense tax credit by increasing the amount of expenditures eligible for the credit, doubling the rate by which the credit is calculated and doubling the amount of the credit that may be claimed and halving the base amount used to determine the credit.

**Implications: MSCC supported the bill as originally drafted; however, MSCC does not support the proposed amendment, which would limit the credit and restrict the number of businesses that can utilize it.**

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# JUDICIARY

UPDATES FROM LAST WEEK

**Work Session Occurred: Thurs 1/15 – Was not voted on due to needing another amendment. The rescheduled date and changes are unknown at this time.**

## **LD 1911 – AN ACT TO AUTOMATICALLY SEAL CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION FOR CERTAIN CRIMES**

Policy Committee: LHHI

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

### **Position: Oppose**

The original bill automatically seals certain criminal convictions, mainly Class D and E offenses after five years, with limited higher-level offenses eligible later and exclusions for violent, sexual, domestic violence, and stalking crimes. The amended bill adds eligible non-convictions, sets clear waiting periods (5 years for D/E, 10 for C, 15 for B), requires no new convictions or unpaid restitution, and limits eligibility to nonviolent offenses. It also clarifies phased implementation and agency access.

**Implications: The amendment could improve access to jobs and housing by sealing eligible records and increasing consistency but may reduce employer and licensing agency access to criminal history, create administrative costs, and raise some public safety transparency concerns.**

**[Chamber testimony link](#)**

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# LABOR

UPDATES FROM LAST WEEK

**Work Session Occurred: Tues 1/13 – was voted on and passed with major changes to the bill.**

## **LD 1587 – AN ACT TO ESTABLISH GREATER ALIGNMENT OF PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN LABOR LAW VIOLATIONS**

Policy Committee: LHHI

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

### **Position: Oppose**

The original bill imposed criminal penalties for intentional violations of Maine labor laws, with fines and possible jail time, and required the Department of Labor to refer cases to the Attorney General. The amended bill replaces criminal penalties with expanded civil enforcement, allowing the Department to investigate, issue subpoenas, order wages and damages, impose daily penalties, and require employers to post citations and notify employees, significantly increasing the Department's authority.

**Implications: As amended, the bill strengthens the Department of Labor's enforcement authority, which may improve compliance with labor laws and help recover unpaid wages, but it also significantly expands penalties and investigatory powers, increasing compliance costs, financial risk, and due process concerns for employers, particularly small businesses.**

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# LABOR

LOOKING AHEAD

**Work Session: Wed 1/21 1:00 PM @ Cross Building, Room 202**

## **LD 1993 – AN ACT TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL CAP ON FUNDS ASSESSED FOR THE SAFETY EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND**

Policy Committee: LHHI

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

### **Position: Oppose**

This bill raises the limit on the total annual amount of the assessment that supports the Department of Labor's Safety Education and Training Fund from 1% to 2% of the total of the workers' compensation benefits paid by all licensed carriers and group and individual self-insured employers during the most recent calendar year for which data is available.

**Implications: Increasing the cap on assessments could provide more funding for workplace safety training and education, potentially reducing injuries and improving safety outcomes for employers and employees. However, it may also lead to higher assessment costs for insurance carriers and self-insured employers, which could be passed to employers as increased premiums or administrative expenses, affecting business operating costs.**

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# LABOR

LOOKING AHEAD

**Public Hearing: Wed 1/21 10:00 AM @ Cross Building, Room 202**

## **LD 2110 – AN ACT TO UPDATE EMPLOYER SUBSTANCE USE TESTING POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

Policy Committee: LHHI

Advocate: Amanda Johnson

### **Position: Monitor**

This bill updates and clarifies employer substance use testing requirements, including employee rights to contest non-negative results, reporting through a medical review officer, changes to rehabilitation timelines and cost responsibility, laboratory requirements, and other technical updates.

**Implications: The bill improves fairness and consistency in workplace substance testing by giving employees the right to contest non-negative results and requiring reporting through a medical review officer, but it may create challenges by shifting rehabilitation costs to employees, shortening program timelines, and raising potential concerns about accuracy, impartiality, or legal liability when employers collect samples or meet lab requirements.**

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# ENERGY, UTILITIES, & TECHNOLOGY

LOOKING AHEAD

## **Upcoming Public Hearing: Tues 1/20 1:00 PM @ Cross Building, Room 211**

### **LD 838 – AN ACT TO EXPLORE PUBLIC FINANCING AND OWNERSHIP OF ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION INFRASTRUCTURE**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Oppose**

This bill would establish a new authority, outside of traditional executive-branch oversight, to oversee the development, planning, financing, and buildout of energy and transmission infrastructure.

**Implications: It could shift strategic transmission planning, siting, and procurements away from utilities, the PUC, and DOER toward a new entity. It could increase labor costs, limiting bidding pool.**

## **Upcoming Public Hearing: Thurs 1/22 10:00 AM @ Cross Building, Room 211**

### **LD 2038 – AN ACT TO REQUIRE MAINE TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION UTILITY PARTICIPATION IN A REGIONAL TRANSMISSION ORGANIZATION**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Oppose**

This bill makes it mandatory for transmission and distribution utilities to participate in a regional transmission organization. The bill provides an exception for consumer-owned utilities and for utilities located in an area of the State in which the retail electricity market is administered by the independent system administrator for northern Maine.

**Implications: The bill mandates participation in a FERC-approved Regional Transmission Organization (RTO), such as ISO-NE, as a condition of owning or controlling T&D assets in most of Maine. As a result, it could eliminate eligibility for the federal RTO participation bonus return on equity that utilities receive when RTO membership is voluntary.**

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# ENERGY, UTILITIES, & TECHNOLOGY

LOOKING AHEAD

## **Upcoming Public Hearing: Thurs 1/20 1:00 PM @ Cross Building, Room 211**

### **LD 2113 – AN ACT TO ALIGN LONG-RANGE GRID STRATEGY WITH THE STATE ENERGY PLAN AND STRENGTHEN INTEGRATED GRID PLANNING**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Monitor, tent. oppose**

This bill directs the DOER to develop a 10-year long-range grid plan aligned with the State Energy Plan and the Commission's integrated grid planning process. It requires the Commission to adopt the plan, establish performance-based regulatory mechanisms to align utility incentives with state grid priorities, and requires utilities to file related proposals in their next general rate case.

**Implications: This legislation would shift how Maine plans and regulates its electric grid by prioritizing coordination, capital efficiency, and policy alignment over utility planning and traditional rate-base growth.**

## **Upcoming Work Sessions: Thurs 1/22 11:30 AM @ Cross Building, Room 211**

### **LD 1936 – AN ACT TO PROVIDE GREATER EQUITY IN AND REDUCE COSTS RELATED TO THE STATE'S NET ENERGY BILLING PROGRAM**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Oppose**

## **Upcoming Work Sessions: Thurs 1/22 2:30 PM @ Cross Building, Room 211**

### **LD 1949 – AN ACT REGARDING ENERGY FAIRNESS**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Oppose**

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# ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

LOOKING AHEAD

## **Upcoming Public Hearing: Wed 1/21 1:00 PM @ Cross Building, Room 216**

### **LD 2063 – AN ACT TO CLARIFY ACTIVITIES ALLOWED UNDER THE NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Monitor**

This bill makes changes to Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act. In particular, it clarifies the circumstances when a permit is needed when an emergency activity is conducted to alleviate a threat caused by a flood event. It adds great ponds and habitat for state endangered and state threatened species that is significant wildlife habitat to the list of areas under the department's compensation program.

**Implications: This bill would clarify emergency flood response authority, and strengthen long-term environmental compensation and enforcement mechanisms.**

## **Upcoming Work Session: Wed 1/21 12:00 PM @ Cross Building, Room 216**

### **LD 1507 – AN ACT TO REQUIRE GENERAL PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF OIL TERMINAL FACILITY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES**

Policy Committee: Energy & Environment

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

#### **Position: Oppose**

### **LD 1870 – AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A CLIMATE SUPERFUND COST RECOVERY PROGRAM TO IMPOSE PENALTIES ON CLIMATE POLLUTERS**

#### **Position: Oppose**

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# HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LOOKING AHEAD

**Upcoming Work Session: Thurs 1/22 1:00 PM @ Cross Building, Room 206**

**LD 1908 - AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE COOPERATION OF ORIGINAL MANUFACTURERS OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO FACILITATE THE REPAIR OF THOSE DEVICES BY DEVICE OWNERS AND INDEPENDENT REPAIR PROVIDERS**

Policy Committee: Technology

Advocate: Ashley Luszczki

**Position: Oppose**

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# HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Last Week

**WORK SESSION: TUES 1/13 1:30 PM @ CROSS BUILDING, ROOM 206**

**LD 1806 – AN ACT TO CREATE A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL UNIT REGISTRY**

Policy Committee: Housing

Advocate: Patrick Woodcock

**Position: Oppose**

Statewide Rental Registry. Creates a new statewide rental registry run by the Secretary of State and imposes registration fees on rental units.

Penalties on Rental Units. Imposes penalties on rental units for non-compliance.

**Committee Action – Voted Ought not to Pass 7-5**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Next Weekly Legislative Update:  
**Monday, January 26, 2026**



**Weekly**  
**Legislative Update**

Join us weekly during the legislative session from 8:30 – 9 a.m. on the first day of the week



**Bangor Early Bird Breakfast: Annual Meeting & Legislative Update**

**Wednesday, January 21**  
**7:15 - 9:00 a.m.**

**Bringing the State Chamber to your region**



**STRENGTHENING RURAL HEALTHCARE IN MAINE**

A VIRTUAL EVENT  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026  
9:00 - 10:00 AM



MAINE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FORUM**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026  
Maple Hill Farm Inn & Conference Center  
Hallowell



MAINE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**2026 BUSINESS DAY AT THE STATE HOUSE**

HALL OF FLAGS, MAINE STATE HOUSE  
TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026  
8:30 AM - 12 NOON

MAINE  

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CHAMBER  
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COMMERCE